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## *Doolittle & Arnold Decorate Tokyo Raiders*



This time Lieutenant General Arnold, Commanding General, Army Air Forces, was doing the honors on Bolling Field when he joined Brigadier General Doolittle in saluting the survivors of the first American air raid on Japan. The generals pinned the Distinguished Flying Cross medal on each of the courageous men who had manned the squadron of B-25 bombers on the daring raid four months after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. General Doolittle himself had already been awarded

the Congressional Medal of Honor and promotion to brigadier general for his efforts in both organizing and leading the flight.

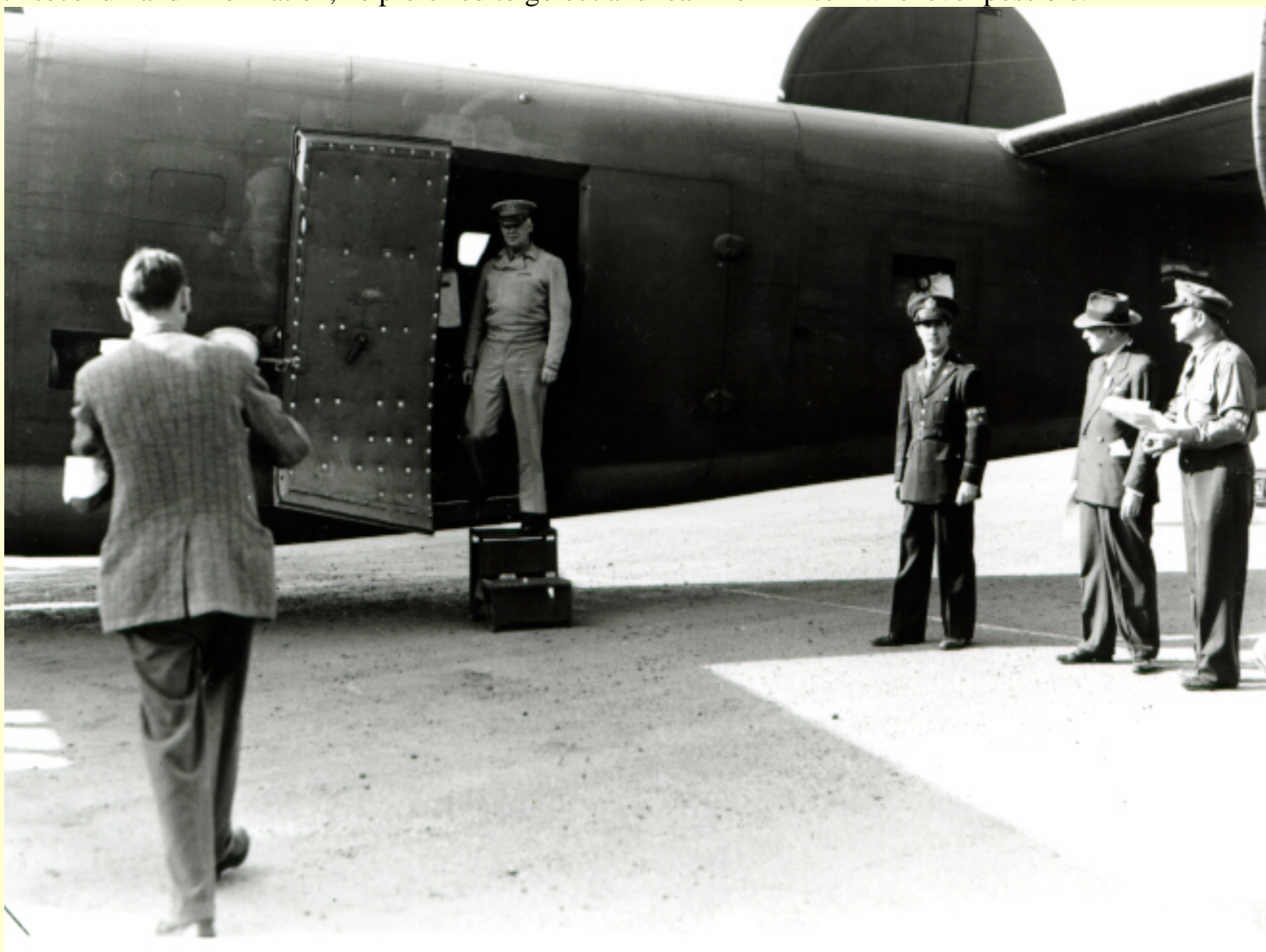
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## *Australian Flight Earns Arnold More Honors*

In October 1942, General Arnold's C-87 Liberator, a transport version of the B-24, swooped down onto the flightline after a record-breaking trip from Brisbane, Australia. The general landed just in time to catch 25th anniversary festivities at Bolling Field (commemorating the activation date of October 2, 1917). The Commanding General, Army Air Forces, was met by General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, and was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal by Assistant Secretary of War for Air Robert A. Lovett. Eleven officers -- including St. Clair Streett, now a brigadier general -- and four enlisted members of the flight received the new Air Medal for their heroism. The two week tour covered 22,000 miles of the South Pacific in 77 hours and 11 minutes.

This voyage allowed General Arnold a first-hand glimpse of American aircraft in action. A man never content with second-hand information, he preferred to go out and learn for himself whenever possible.

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## *Roosevelt Presents Planes to Yugoslavia*

From the back seat of his open car on the runway of Bolling Field, President Roosevelt presented four American-built Liberator heavy bombers to the Yugoslavian government. Forty American trained Yugoslav flyers were at the field, ready to take command of the planes and join the forces of Major General Doolittle in the Mediterranean theater of war.

As the aviators took control, they became the first combat unit of their nation to be activated for service by the U.S. Army Air Forces. When flying from bases in Africa and Italy over Yugoslavia and other



areas of Europe, the bombers would bear both the U.S. Army Air Forces and Yugoslavian Air Force insignia.

"These planes," said the President, "will serve a two-fold purpose. One, to drop bombs on the common enemy. Two, to deliver to the Yugoslavian patriots the supplies for which they have waited so long - food, medicine, and yes, arms and ammunition."

The President turned the planes over to the Yugoslavs through Major General Barney M. Giles, Chief of Staff of the Army Air Forces, who in turn formally presented them to the Yugoslavian Ambassador, Constatin Fotitch. The ambassador expressed the gratitude of his King, government and people that Yugoslav airmen with American wings were joining the battle for victory.

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## *Post-War Era*



Following World War II, Bolling Field, which had always been an "exempted station" responsible directly to the Headquarters Army Air Forces and its predecessor organizations) was assigned to the Continental Air Forces, established in December 1944. It was redesignated as Strategic Air Command in March 1946. When SAC moved to Andrews Field on October 20, 1946, the Bolling Field Command again became an independent command. On March 19, 1948, the Bolling Field Command was redesignated Headquarters Command U.S. Air Force. Also in 1948, Bolling Field, along with the other "fields," became an Air Force Base.

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## 'Air Force Hour' Final Broadcast

The official radio program of the Air Force went off the air May 1, 1952, after four years of broadcasting from Bolling Air Force Base the latest armed forces news, in-depth documentary features and popular music. The "Air Force Hour" featured the Symphony Orchestra and the Singing Sergeants of the U.S. Air Force Band, an elite musical organization with headquarters on Bolling since September 1941.



The show, which was produced, directed, written and engineered by Bolling military members, was broadcast across the United States and to various parts of the world, including front-line

foxholes in Korea. The radio program had a "Hooper" rating of 5.9, which meant it had approximately six million listeners.

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## *The Sacred Cow Leaves Bolling AFB*

The official aircraft of Presidents Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman, nicknamed the "Sacred Cow" made its last voyage when it was flown out of Bolling AFB by Major General Brooke Allen, Chief of the Air Force Headquarters Command. The Douglas C-54C was delivered to Andrews AFB to be disassembled and presented to the Smithsonian Institution.

After being retired from Presidential service in 1947 with almost 8,000 flying hours logged, the plane had been turned over to the 1254th Air Transport Squadron at Washington National Airport. In January 1955, the Sacred Cow was added to the Bolling inventory, where for nearly seven years it was used for a variety of military administrative trips out of Washington, logging more than 4,000 additional flying hours.

The passenger log of the Sacred Cow was a veritable "who's who" of American statesmen, foreign dignitaries and entertainers, from Winston Churchill to Bob Hope. Military passengers included Generals Arnold, Doolittle, Spaatz and Marshall.

The prestigious aircraft now rests proudly at the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio.

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## *The Last Flight*

By the late 1950s, the skies above Washington were becoming perilously crowded. Bolling Air Force Base and Washington National Airport, with their parallel runways just across the river from each other, were competing for air space. As a result, flight activities of all fixed-wing aircraft were transferred to nearby Andrews AFB, Maryland.

Forty-four years after the dedication of Bolling Field, the last airplane departed July 1, 1962, carrying 33 passengers and six crew members bound for Andrews. Ceremonies for the last flight, as well as the 44th anniversary program, began when Colonel Wilson R. Wood, base commander, placed wreaths on the graves of six former base commanders buried at Arlington National Cemetery. The colonel later hosted an informal luncheon for 12 former base commanders who returned as honored guests of the base.



"I was here at the old place from 1919 to 1922 and then in 1935," recalled Major General (Ret.) Martin F. Scanlon, the second and twelfth commander (the only person to have held command twice). "In those days what we flew was all stick and linen and wire."

"What did we do in fog?" asked Major General (Ret.) Howard C. Davidson, commander from 1928 to 1932. "Just got in as best we could. We had no radios. Couldn't talk to the field other than by dot and dash. There was no instrument flying equipment."

At 3 p.m., a full honors military parade of 1,000 troops from Bolling and Andrews passed in review of the flightline. At a formal dinner that evening in the officers' club, more than 300 guests, including numerous civic and Air Force leaders, watched Colonel Wood cut the anniversary cake. At the same time, base non-commissioned officers hosted a special anniversary dinner at the NCO Club, with guest of honor MSgt. (Ret.) Roy Hooe, crew member of the 1929 Question Mark flight.

The flightline went out of business as a conventional aircraft base at 4:05 p.m. with the take-off of a C54, piloted by General Allen, Chief of the Air Force Headquarters Command, and Colonel Wood. On the passenger list were various dignitaries and the 12 former commanders of Bolling.

Before leaving for the 14-minute flight to Andrews, General Allen was given permission by the Bolling tower to make one final circle of the base. The general, who had flown a B-17 Flying Fortress out of Hickam Field in pursuit of the enemy immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor, officially pronounced the closing of Bolling's flightline with a farewell salute as he flew the C-54 across the field.

As the plane flew slowly over Bolling AFB in the final departure, General Allen radioed to the tower: "I hereby declare that Bolling Air Force Base is no longer available for use by fixed-wing aircraft I say goodbye to all as we depart for Andrews Air Force Base."



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## *The Changing Face of Bolling*

The runways had become silent, but by no means did this mean the end of Bolling's significance as an Air Force base. Just as it had served in the past as the stage for countless special events and aerial displays, Bolling evolved into the ceremonial and administrative headquarters for the Air Force which it is today. Two special Bolling units, the U.S. Air Force Band and Honor Guard, have represented the Air Force in Washington at Presidential inaugurations, parades, and VIP arrivals and departures - from Nikita Khrushchev and Queen Elizabeth to Mikhail Gorbachev and Prince Charles.



It seemed appropriate that Bolling would also honor military leaders in official ceremonies, since as an Army Air Field it had so proudly played host to most of the early

heroes of the sky. Bolling participated in the retirements of most of the aviators mentioned earlier in this story, including Generals Arnold, Eaker and Quesada. The base held a special place in the hearts of these men, many of them returning in their later years to attend other Air Force ceremonies, for the Question Mark reunion in the 1960s or just "passing through."

And, as a fitting tribute to Bolling Field's gallant flyers, men and women from Bolling participated in their "full honors" funerals. The widow of the late Lieutenant General Quesada made it a point to thank the members of the U.S. Air Force Honor Guard for their participation in the funeral service of her husband in February 1993. The elite honor guard, whose motto is "To honor with dignity," has had its



headquarters on Bolling since 1948, originally a special ceremonial unit of the military police squadron.

"As we walked behind them following the caisson on that very cold morning, we were uplifted and grateful for their respect and, in perfect unison, performance,"



wrote Mrs. Quesada about the Honor Guard. "It added so much to our memories of a wonderful man and we thank each gentleman and lady so very much."

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## Modern Bolling

By the mid-1970s, Bolling AFB had become part of the Military Airlift Command. Throughout the next few years, Bolling would experience a series of reorganizations within MAC, at one time falling under the 89th Military Airlift Wing at Andrews AFB.



soon realized that Bolling's mission was unique. The decision was made in 1985 to make Bolling the headquarters for all Air Force operations in the National Capital Region. The "military district" concept had already been employed by the Army and Navy, with the Military District of Washington and Naval District of Washington, respectively. After setting the parameters from which the Air Force District of Washington (AFDW) would command and operate, the plan was put into motion to activate AFDW as a direct reporting unit on Bolling AFB in 1995. Today, AFDW people work proudly together to serve, support and present the world's best Air Force in our nation's capital.

In addition to the AFDW, Bolling AFB is host to a variety of organizations representing a cross-section of the Air Force, from base-level offices to Headquarters for the Office of Special investigations, the Air Force Surgeon General and the Air Force Chief of Chaplains. Bolling also serves as a diverse military community, housing families of all services and hosting one of the largest defense organizations, the Defense Intelligence Agency Center.

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## *Conclusion*

The runways of Bolling are now covered with office buildings, quarters, modern roadways and fields of grass. The old hangars that once housed some of the most famous planes in Army and Air Force history now serve as offices, shops, and warehouses. The roar of airplanes can still be heard above the base, but instead of DH-4s or B-24s from Bolling Field, they are modern commercial jet aircraft bringing thousands of people daily to Washington National Airport -- separated from Bolling only by the Potomac River.

Nonetheless, enough of the historic buildings and landmarks from the past eras have been carefully preserved and marked, hints of a bygone era when Bolling was the center of military aviation. While these memories are often overlooked amidst the modern-day activities, the legacies of the brave aviators who knew so many years ago the important role military airpower would hold in America's defense will not be forgotten.

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